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Thesis

THE "MARKED" INDIVIDUAL IN THOMAS MANN'S SHORT STORIES

by

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DIGEST OF THE THESIS

My work was begun by a careful reading and study of the twenty-four short stories covering the three decades of Thomas Mann's life. These works all possessed "marked" individuals that is, individuals marked by unusual background in early life, or marked by a deformity, inherited or acquired, or whose lives have been deeply affected by unusual circumstances to set them apart from men of their own race, nationality, or social group.

I then set about to prove why Thomas Mann was interested in the "marked" individual by comparing his life with his works.

The story of his life has been based upon his own autobiographical sketch and brought up to date by reference to magazines and newspaper articles.

A study has also been made of several critics who have commented on his short stories.

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Thomas Mann has no real heroes, even the preacher in Fiorenza preaching penance becomes a puppet to power.

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Familiar symbolist theme of artist's solitude prevalent in Tonio Kröger found in the following:

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THE MARKED INDIVIDUAL IN THOMAS MANN'S SHORT STORIES

I. INTRODUCTION

When Thomas Mann received an honorary degree at the hands of President Conant of Harvard University, it was accompanied by the following citation:

"Doctor of Philosophy, Thomas Mann, famous author, who has interpreted life to many of our fellow-citizens and together with a very few contemporaries sustains the high dignity of German culture."[1]

In reading Tonio Kröger, which is based largely on the author's own boyhood and early youth, I was struck by the following sentence: "I stand between two worlds, I am at home in neither, and I suffer in consequence."[2]

These two statements, one about Thomas Mann, and the other by the great writer himself, are sufficiently impressive to warrant a further study of the man and his autobiographical short stories.

1. The Nation, March 6, 1937.

2. Tonio Kröger, page 132, Stories of Three Decades.

In 1936 H. T. Lowe-Porter collected and translated twenty-four of the outstanding short stories arranged by Thomas Mann in the order of their appearance, and published them in a book called Stories of Three Decades.

These short stories are an abstract and brief chronicle of the author's life, written at every stage from 1896 to 1929 when he received the Nobel Prize. Thomas Wolfe in The Story of a Novel, said, "any serious work of creation is of necessity autobiographical. A man must use the material and experience of his own life if he is to create anything of substantive value."

A number of these short stories have not been published in English before. A careful comparison with the original shows no loss of feeling because of translation.

II. REVIEW OF THE TWENTY-FOUR STORIES

LITTLE HERR FRIEDEMANN

Johann Friedemann's father dies just before the birth of his son. This is the first tragedy to affect the boy's life. His family is left in moderate circumstances. The second tragedy leaves the real "mark" upon his life. His nurse, a drink addict, lets him fall from the couch, which leaves Johann with a hunched back and pigeon-breasted chest. His arms are disproportionately long. At sixteen he is disillusioned when he finds his secret love kissing another boy. He then renounces love and teaches himself to take pleasure in what life still has to offer. He loves nature. He is fond of good books. He loves music, attends all the concerts, and plays the violin quite well, regardless of how grotesque he appears in doing so. His greatest enthusiasm is for the theatre. He has an inconspicuous business of his own.

The year he becomes thirty, a new public official is appointed. This commandant brings with him a wife who is very different from the other women of the town. She is not beautiful, but possesses an appearance and manners that make her most attractive to the men.

Little Herr Friedemann first sees her riding by in her carriage, and although she does not speak to him, her look leaves a deep impression upon him. A few days later

when she and her husband call on little Herr Friedemann's sisters, he does not dare go into his house. The next evening, however, he sits beside her at the opera. Her presence upsets him, and when she reaches to pick up her fan, their heads touch, and the fragrance of her body upsets him so tremendously that he has to leave, walk home, and spend a sleepless night. The next day, he goes to visit her on the pretext of returning the call which she made on his sisters. The Frau Commandant is very sympathetic and pleasant and leads him on. He receives from her an invitation to attend a party they are giving.

This woman has awakened all those forces which from his youth on he has tried to suppress, feeling, as he does, that for him such emotions spell torture and destruction. On the way homehe stops at the water's edge and experiences the urge to end it all.

At the party, the Frau Commandant leads little Herr Friedemann into the moonlit garden, where their conversation drives the poor cripple to his knees. He buries his face in her lap. She flings him from her upon the ground and vanishes.

He finally overcomes his remorse and the disgust he feels for himself by lowering himself into the pond where he is drowned.

[illegible] Dr. Gaston [illegible] in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

DISILLUSIONMENT

This was really Mann's first work. It is a dialogue between the author and a stranger he met in Venice. The stranger is marked in that he meditates too deeply upon the limitations of life--a sort of melancholia or the German "Grübelei". Ordinary normal living is limited. He expects divine virtue or hair-raising wickedness, ravishing loveliness or else consummate horror from life.

Quoting from the stranger:

"Do you know, my dear sir, what disillusionment is? Not a miscarriage in small, unimportant matters, but the great and general disappointment which everything, all of life, has in store?"

Examples of his disillusionment are:

The house was on fire. He ran about calling "Fire, fire!" He then thought, "So this is fire. This is what it is like to have the house on fire. Is this all there is to it?"

In the face of great works of art, best-praised sights, he would think: "It is beautiful, and yet--is that all? Is it no more beautiful than that?"

He falls deeply in love with a charming gentle girl, but she marries another. This is a painful experience for him. During his wakeful tortured night he reflects:

"So this is the greatest pain we can suffer. Well, and what then--is this all?"

The first time he gazes upon the sea--the vast wide sea, he says: "But there is the horizon."

So he dreams and waits for death, that last disappointment--"So this is a great experience--well, and what of it? What is it after all?"

This questioning is not all abnormal--for all thinking people have had similar experiences, only they do not continue it incessantly. It is also not so uncommon among the "people of the streets" when they answer all situations with "so what?" or the blasé youth of yesterday that would not admit any feeling.

THE DILETTANTE

The Dilettante and the stranger in Disillusionment seem to be kindred spirits. He feels a disgust for everything and for life as a whole.

Until he is fourteen he spends many hours alone in the attic with his well-equipped puppet theatre. He is adept in the art of imitating and adept in the use of language which makes him a favorite with his classmates. He brings home good poetry, but poor reports.

His mother believes he can develop his artistic talent but his father insists on his entering the lumber business. When his father and mother die, he has income enough to do as he pleases, so he leaves the business and passes his days in reading and doing nothing--but this is boredom.

He cannot fit into any sphere, because he does not have enough money to belong to the upper strata, and he himself will not take on the customs of any other.

He finally remarks that, "the world displays a readiness, born of indolence, to pay a man whatever degree of respect he himself demands. But once suffer yourself to become split, forfeit your own self-esteem, betray that you despise yourself, and your view will be blindly accepted by all. As for me I am a lost soul."[1]

He considers suicide but feels that such an attitude is too heroic for a dilettante.

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TOBIAS MINDENICKEL

Mindenickel's outward appearance is "odd, striking, and provoking to laughter."[1] He is poor, His clothes are neat but shabby. Whenever he walks with his cane in the street the children pull his cane and shout after him and all the people laugh. He makes no defence. He possesses a very great inferiority complex. He has no interests. When he comes home to his barren rooms he sits on a sofa and just stares at the rug.

One day Tobias buys a dog. He calls him Esau. Esau is a means by which Tobias can show superiority and makes up for the pain and humility he suffers. He prepares the dog's meal and makes him jump for it a dozen times. He beats the dog and throws him down yelping--when the dog comes humbly, begging, the feeling of condescension gives Tobias a feeling of joy.

One day Tobias is cutting a small piece of bread for the dog who jumps for each piece. The knife runs into the dog's shoulder. Tobias is very happy nursing and caring for the wounded animal.

After the wound has healed, the dog becomes again very lively and playful. It annoys Tobias so much that he picks him up and dashes him to the ground. The dog falls to the ground shivering and bleeding. Tobias rushes to his side consoling and applying his best handkerchief to

1. Page 57.

the wound, but the dog dies.

Tobias furnishes an example of abnormal cruelty in order to display superiority and feeling of love and compassion.

LITTLE LIZZY

Here is a queer situation. Anna, a lovely woman of unusual charm and wealth is married to Jakoby, a lawyer some ten years older. He is a colossus of a man! His legs remind one of an elephant's; there is scarcely anything which could be called a neck. His eyes are narrow and watery, his mouth extremely small, and his cheeks droop with fullness. His upper lip and round head are covered with a few scanty light-colored bristles. He despises himself, but he is very much in love with his wife.

His wife is not a moral woman, but has affairs with a young musician who belongs to the type that wears flowing ties and long hair.

The strange way they get rid of Jakoby is most unusual. Anna gives a new-beer party and all the guests come in costume. Jakoby comes against his will, dressed in old satin as a dancing girl called Lizzy. The music is written for four hands and played by the wife and her lover. In the middle of the dance Jakoby dies of heart stroke.

THE WARDROBE

In this weird tale Albrecht van der Qualen is traveling from Berlin to Rome. A number of physicians have told him that he has but a few months to live. He has long since given up the habit of keeping track of the day, month, or hour. He does not even know how far along the road he is, but somewhere in northern Germany. He gets off the train, he knows not where, checks his baggage at the station, and starts off. On the outskirts of the town he comes upon a sign which states that on the third floor there are rooms to let. He rents one of them and then goes in town for supper. Upon returning he brings back some cognac. Just as he is about to drink, he looks up and sees a lovely young girl framed in the open door of the wardrobe. She comes in and he invites her to stay. She is very kind and understanding and tells him many sad tales. She returns nightly.

The tale ends in a most mysterious manner--no one knows how long this continued or even if van der Qualen ever got off the train--and who would dare say?

THE WAY TO THE CHURCHYARD

A mysterious air fills this tale.

Praise God Piepsam is walking to the churchyard to visit his dead relatives. He is dressed all in black and carries a black stick. The description of the outer man matches that of the inner man. He has one great vice--drink, which has a strong hold on him. He trudges mournfully along.

On the road are also mentioned two journeymen, one a giant, the other a hunchback, walking barefoot because they carry their shoes on their backs. These are mentioned casually.

In direct contrast to Piepsam, riding on a bicycle, is a young man called Life. He is brightly dressed and gay of manner.

Piepsam growls that he is going to report him for riding on the path instead of on the road. He goes into a terrible rage over it, drops dead, and is taken away by a Red Cross wagon.

TONIO KRÖGER

This is the story of the life of Tonio Kröger, which in many respects resembles that of Thomas Mann. Tonio's father is Consul Kröger, a grain dealer, and his dark-haired mother comes from the far south. Thus his heredity is different from that of the ordinary boy of that northern town.

Tonio soliloquizes, asking: "Why is it I am different? Why do I fight everything? How regular and comfortable the others must feel, knowing that everybody knows just where they stand!"

Tonio loves Hans Hansen, because the latter is his opposite in coloring and disposition. Even his own name is foreign and queer--Tonio--so the boys call him Kröger.

François Knaak, who is the dancing master mentioned in a later story, conducts a private class for the boys and girls of the best families. At the dancing class, Tonio always does the wrong and embarrassing thing.

His father dies; the old farm is dissolved; their house is sold, and his mother marries again. Tonio feels that all this is a little irregular, but then who is he to call his mother to order, he who writes poetry and cannot give an answer when asked what he means to do in life?

When he finishes school, he leaves his native town and lives in the large cities in the south. He writes many things

led on by a fire within which causes him to give up all life for the work of a creator.

He goes about dressed properly and well and always says that "every artist is as Bohemian as the deuce inside! Let him at least wear proper clothes and behave outwardly like a respectable being."[1]

When he is reproached about his calling he says--"Don't talk about calling, it is a curse, believe me!"[2]

During his conversation with Lisabeta, a painter and friend, he is able to unburden himself and discuss desires which again come upon him. He admits he loves life and then again says "We who are set apart and different do not conceive as unusual....."[3]

And at the end of the long discourse Lisabeta tells him that he is a bourgeois on the wrong path.

Tonio then decides to visit Denmark again, now that he is famous.

His return is not very warmly welcomed--his old home is now the public library and the hotel keeper views him suspiciously. Again he utters his yearnings at the resort where the young Danes hold an outing: "To begin again, to grow up like you, regular like you, simple and normal and cheerful, in conformity with God and man."[4] And finally Tonio sums it all up with:

"I stand between two worlds. I am at home in neither,

1. Page 102.
2. Page 104.
3. Page 108.
4. Page 128.

and I suffer in consequence. The bourgeois are stupid; but you adorers of the beautiful, who call me phlegmatic and without aspirations, you ought to realize that there is a way of being an artist that goes so deep and is so much a matter of origins and destinies that no longing seems to it sweeter and more worth knowing than longing after the bliss of the commonplace. For if anything is capable of making a poet of a literary man, it is my bourgeois love of the human, the living and usual. I even almost think it is itself that love of which it stands written that one may speak with the tongues of men and of angels and yet, having it not, is as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals."[5]

5. Page 132.

TRISTAN

Dr. Leander is the director of Einfried, a sanitorium in the mountains, for heart diseases, paralytics, rheumatics, nervous suffering of all kinds and degrees. There is an elderly lady, wife of a preacher, who has brought fourteen children into the world and is now incapable of a single thought. Even an author is there stealing time from God.

One day there arrives the robust Herr Klöterjahn with his delicate, fragile ethereal wife who since the birth of her particularly well-formed and vigorous child has developed and infection of the trachea.

Herr Klöterjahn's wife makes quite an impression upon all the patients, particularly the writer, Spinnell, a queer appearing person, unsocial and given to fits--and writing a book. Spinnell reads to her from his works, and he too, like Tonio Kröger, feels that a writer is a different brand of person, when he says, "It infrequently happens that a race with sober, practical bourgeois traditions will towards the end of its days flare up in some form of art."[1]

Very often in their conversation she speaks of her baby's, little Anton's, strong lungs, his good health and his great strength.

A few days later one of the guests happens to

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mention something about little Anton and his mother seems almost to explain that they were different--"Thanks, how should they be? He and my husband are quite well, of course."[1]

One day all the patients go on a sleigh party except three, two of which are Spinnell and Klöterjahn's wife. During their absence Spinnell asks her to play some of Chopin's pieces, which she does. They are both greatly stirred by the music. The sleigh party returns before Spinnell has a chance to say anything.

A few days later they wire for Klöterjahn to come. He does, although somewhat reluctantly, deeming it not entirely necessary. The full-figured, healthy looking nurse carries the plump and fragrant Anton.

Spinnell writes a letter to Klöterjahn telling him how wrong it is of him to take this lovely woman and make of her a married woman, a housewife, a mother--and that he is an enemy of beauty. Klöterjahn is naturally quite furious about it and in the midst of his fury he is called to witness the last breath of his wife. Spinnell goes into the garden, very much distressed and meets Anton Klöterjahn, Gabriele Eckhof's son being wheeled by his nurse. The child shouts with bursts of wild merriment at the sight of Spinnell.

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THE HUNGRY

There is no definite theme to this tale, just the introspections of an introvert who happens to be hopelessly in love with Lily, a dancer. He feels himself apart when he writes: "We lonely ones, we isolated dreamers, disinherited of life, who spend our introspective days remote in an artificial, icy air and spread abroad a cold breath as from strange regions so soon as we come among living human beings and they see our brows marked with the sign of knowledge and of fear; we poor ghosts of life"--and then he goes on as Tonio Kröger, "We all cherish a hidden and unappeased yearning for the harmless, simple and real in life; for a little friendly, familiar human happiness. That life from which we are shut out--we do not envisage it as wild beauty and cruel splendor, it is not the extraordinary we crave, we extraordinary ones,--it is life in all its everydayness that we want."[1]

As he leaves the performance on the street he meets a beggar who is also hungry--they are brothers--both possess a hunger.

1. Page 169.

THE INFANT PRODIGY

The prodigy is a little Greek boy named Bibi. To contrast, his dark skin and hair, his suit and shoes are of white silk. He knows he is to put on a show and so uses all his mannerisms, such as making an artful face, bowing and smiling.

The mother of this fragile genius is an extremely obese woman with a powdered double chin.

After the performance he is led to the seat of a princess who asks him whether music just comes into his head when he sits down. He answers, "Oui, madame." To himself he thinks: "Oh what a stupid princess!"

On the way out an elegant young lady has to whisper to her brother for he cannot tear himself away from the sight of his simple, good-looking young features.

In the audience there is also an old man who is quite embarrassed and impressed because he cannot play anything more than "Ach du lieber Augustin."

There is not even a thread of a plot in this descriptive tale, it is rather a study of contrasts in marked people which can be summarized as follows:

Bibi, the prodigy, well dressed and applauded, and an older girl, and her dirty and ill-kempt brother.

Bibi is frail, dark, artistic and his mother is extremely obese.

The outward sweet lovely manner of Bibi contrasts with an inward arrogant egoism displayed in his princess incidents.

Bibi, a young child, is master of the piano, while the old man can play only "Ach du lieber Augustin."

GLADIUS DEI

This incident opens with a happy and joyful description of Munich--birds, people, artists, works of art, music and musical instruments. In direct contrast with all this is a mournful figure draped in an ample black cloak. His face is pale and haggard. Two little girls of the common ordinary class find his appearance very amusing, but he only clutches his cloak more tightly and hurries on.

As he strides up the Ludwigstrasse he notices a crowd gazing at the exhibits in one of the art shop windows. Inside is a picture of the Madonna, but an entirely unconventional one. The figure is femininely beautiful and the child at her breast is glancing at the beholder with a wise look in his eye. The crowd is laughing and discussing the model who is the mistress of the painter.

The mournful young man gazes at the picture for fully a half hour. During the next few days he experiences a burning desire that he must do something about the picture.

The following day he goes into the art shop, asks for the manager, and demands that he remove the picture of the Holy Mother of God from the window. The manager has him finally thrown out and, as he lands on

the street amid the curious and amused passersby, he sees with his eyes a burning pile of all the objects of art and nude statues and hears from it wild rumblings issuing. Above the city he sees a burning fiery sword. Drawing his dark cloak about him more tightly he murmurs: "Gladius Dei super terram--and adds, cito et velociter!" (The sword of God above the earth--and added, speedily and swiftly.)

FIORENZA

Lorenzo de Medici, yellow, ugly, and now dying, has been often proclaimed the lord of beauty. He who adores the senses lacks one of the most precious, that of smell. But he himself in one of his moments remarks that "It was well so. Had I been born beautiful, I had never made myself the lord of beauty. Hindrance is the will's best friend."[1] Lorenzo, to satisfy his desire for the beautiful, steals money from the government coffers to pay the artists, goldsmiths, silversmiths and fine furniture makers.

He has two sons Piero, the older, who is to carry on the family name and tradition, but who is only a wastrel, and Giovanni, who at seventeen is already a cardinal and possible candidate for the papal seat.

These boys are brought up to brush aside everything ugly, sad, or painful and to be only receptive to the beautiful and joyous and thus, while their father was dying, they leave him alone.

The prior is a priest who is causing quite a bit of disturbance at this time by his preachings against the practices of the time. He condemns painters for using harlots as models for their madonnas, and clothing the virgin in royal velvets and colors instead of poor raiment. He condemns all Florence and the wickedness

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[illegible]

prevalent there. He draws enormous crowds and on one eventful day he condemns Fiore, the beautiful mistress of Lorenzo, Fiore, of noble Florentine blood, whose father "begot her without priestly blessing and then died in exile". In Farrara, in her girlhood days lived a family with two girls and four boys. They were all friendly and played together except one, Girolamo. He was small, weak, ugly and afraid of people. He buried himself in his books and played mournful melodies on his lute. She makes him fall in love with her so hopelessly that he runs away to Bologna and becomes a Dominican monk and now his name went through all Italy, for he is the prior who preaches the return of Christ and the downfall of all the wickedness of the time.

Fiore sends for the Priest Girolamo to administer the last rites to Lorenzo, but her intention is to have him murdered. Lorenzo welcomes him, as he feels the need of a stronger mind at this time. The two have a long discussion and the priest demands three things of him:

(1) that he shall be penitent,

(2) that he shall return all unjustly owned property to the state and,

(3) that he make Florence free forever from the lordship of his (the Medici) house.

The first two are not so difficult, but with the third he sees that the priest would then control Florence and, rebelling, he dies.

A GLEAM

Baron Harry, a cavalry captain, is a jolly fortunate young man with a conquering-hero face who finds waltz music too slow and demands more "pep" from the Avantageur who is conducting the music. The Avantageur calmly hands his baton over to Lieutenant von Gelbsattel. He does not care very much for this affair but he has to be careful not to offend, for, first of all, he is of the bourgeois, and secondly, he has written a book. The latter fact must make people feel a little shy of him, he thought, as did Tonio Kröger.

The swallows are a group of dancers from Vienna, a kind of burlesque. The cavalry officers and captains enjoying their company now select ten of the prettiest for a champagne supper.

Baron Harry is always playing pranks such as swinging a whole large pan of the baker boy's rolls into the river and, after watching the terrified boy jumping about, tosses him a coin which many times pays for the rolls. Because these men are of the nobility nothing is ever said of these pranks.

Baroness Anna is also at this party. She is a delicate-appearing, quiet person who loves her husband in spite of his pranks and infidelity. She is sitting at the table with the Avantageur, but does not pay much

attention to him.

One of the swallows is dancing, singing and drinking with the Baron. He pays no attention to his wife. Once in a while the swallow casts a glance at the Baroness. The climax comes when Baron Harry places his wedding ring upon the swallow's hand.

Then Baroness Anna stands up and walks toward the door. There is a hush, some of the company call the Baron, but he pays no heed. Then the little swallow gets up, as if moved by a feminine instinct of pity for suffering love. She reaches the Baroness Anna's side, presses the ring in her hand, and bending to kiss her hand whispers, "Forgive". The gleam of joy that comes into the Baroness' life is when these two lives, miles apart, for one illusory moment touch each other.

AT THE PROPHET'S

It is on Good Friday evening. (The import of the day should add to the success of any occult meeting.) Daniel is the leader and he has sent out a number of invitations and the people are now assembling. There is a Polish artist and the slender girl who lives with him, a lyric poet, a tall black-bearded Semite with his heavy pale wife, a retired cavalry captain, a young philosopher, and finally a novelist. The meeting takes place on the top floor of a cheap studio building. At the head of the stairs is a table covered with a faded altar cloth upon which are six candles. Upon the door is the name Daniel in black crayon. The boy who answers their ring shows them in.

The room is lighted by candles. A young girl with a simple innocent face, who is Maria Josepha, Daniel's sister, shakes hands with each guest and explains that her brother has gone away, but will be with them in spirit, and that a friend of his from Switzerland will read his Proclamations. The room has an alcove which gives the effect of a chapel. On the left of this alcove is a table with a white cover holding a crucifix, a seven-branching candlestick, a goblet of red wine and a piece of raisin cake on a plate. At the very front of all this is a low platform with a gilded plaster column. This column is covered with a blood-red silk altar cloth and

upon it lie the Proclamations. All these things are symbolic.

Just then another guest arrives, a rich woman who has a habit of frequenting such places out of curiosity, boredom, craving for something different, She comes and sits beside the novelist who knows her and is very much interested in her daughter Sonia.

A youth of twenty-eight, a mixture of brutality and weakness and with an outward appearance of coarseness arrives and reads the proclamations for about an hour, an irritable ego expanding itself. When he has finished, they all leave silently. The novelist sees the rich woman to her carriage, asks to be remembered to Sonia, and goes along for his supper, on good terms with life in general.

A WEARY HOUR

This is an account of an hour spent in introspection by a writer who remains up to work after midnight while the rest of the household sleeps. He is afflicted with a chronic catarrh and spasms in his chest about which he has been warned. His work has brought about his physical condition, long hours, lack of sun, irregular living conditions.

He feels that when he started to write he could stand defeats and hardships because he was physically strong, but now that he has position, wife and children, he is worn out. He feels his life "disciplined and shaped by the possession of a gift".[1] Then he again comes back to his illness which gnaws at him day and night and he says: "To make light and little of it all, of suffering and achievement alike--that was what made a man great." And then he asks, "Shall my sufferings be vain? No, they must make me great!"[2]

Then he soliloquizes upon the demands his writings make upon him, and bending over his sleeping wife, he says he does love her so, but this self-imposed task tires him out so completely that his feelings do not respond. He must never be utterly hers or happy in her for the sake of his mission.

No more brooding! He must bring his work to an end

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and find it good--so that when others see it they will see or feel something of the one from whence it came.

THE BLOOD OF THE WALSUNGS

This is a story of the strong unnatural love of a brother for a sister. Siegmund and Sieglinde are twins of about nineteen years of age. Sieglinde is engaged to a colorless government official of some thirty-five years of age, Beckenrath by name.

Beckenrath often comes to their home for meals. The twins wish to attend the performance of the Walküre for the last time together.

Siegmund is dressing for the opera. He sprinkles himself lavishly with perfume and takes real delight in the white bear-skin rug on the floor, the silk under-garments he wears. He has hardly finished dressing when his sister comes in and tells him the carriage is waiting and watches him dress. They spend a few minutes on the chaise-longue in mutual caresses and enjoyment of each other's expensive perfume.

In the carriage they draw the brown silk curtains and shut themselves in, and it is the same on the return trip. Refreshments are awaiting them, but Siegmund is cross and eats little. His thoughts are that now all their relations with each other are over. He has no friends, has never had any except his twin. He leaves her with a curt good night. This has never happened before. She comes to him when she is half ready for bed and they both agree that their relationship will never change.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT

This is the description of a derailment between Munich and Dresden. The people mentioned here are not very different from the ordinary run that one may encounter on such a trip. A pompous bemonocled army man escorting a little dog is observed by the author. Later this same man occupies the sleeper directly across. In his effort to keep the little dog with him, he takes on a very insolent manner. For instance, when the conductor asks to see the ticket, he partly opens the door and throws it out causing a corner of the ticket to hit the conductor's eye.

Another passenger is a little old lady with a black threadbare cape. She is very nervous and after being rebuked by the very official-looking guard, climbs into the second-class train. No one is really hurt as a result of this accident, but they are all much frightened and many of the passengers complete the ride in the first-class compartment.

FIGHT BETWEEN JAPPE AND DO ESCOBAR

Johnny's mother, Mrs. Bishop, is an English woman who has married his father, a German business man. This inter-marriage does not affect Johnny as it does Tonio Kröger. Johnny's mother has a spacious house outside the city and a villa at the sea. She does not move in "society", although it would be open to her. She manages that her children, Johnny and his sister, have social intercourse and they associate exclusively with the children of well-to-do families. Mrs. Bishop believes "that to be well thought of by others, no more is needed than to think well of oneself."[1] Johnny is the best-dressed boy in town, distinctly aristocratic and elegant. Anyone else would be laughed at for the type of English clothes he wears, but he wears them with such a disarming and confident air that he never suffers in the least.

The third of the trio is Jürgen Brattström, a decent, phlegmatic, short-legged lad without any prominent characteristics. He begins a little private business in licorice sticks. His father made his own money, achieved public office, and built a red sandstone house next to Johnny's. Johnny is the leader of the trio and it is he who suggests that they witness the fight between Jappe and Do Escobar. The latter are of the middle class and indulge in practices not acceptable to boys of Johnny's

1. Page 329.

position. They attend classes when they desire, visit public houses, stroll evenings along the main street following girls about. Somehow or other these two have come to blows over some girl and are going to fight it out.

Herr Knaak, the dancing master, is the same one as in Tonio Kröger. In fact, one is led to believe that Tonio is one of the trio. Herr Knaak is to be the umpire. There are all sorts of tales about him among the boys--he wears corsets, he picks up the edge of his frock coat with his finger tips. They wonder as to what kind of a man he is. This fight, he knows will help him in his position with the young.

It isn't much of a fight, ending with a bleeding nose. The audience, however, is in the mood for fighting and calls for wrestling or stunts. Tonio is afraid he will be called upon to perform, but Johnny has purposely come for the fight; the fight is over and he gathers his trio together and leaves.

FELIX KRULL

Felix Krull writes his story, as does the Dilettante, in order to seek some refuge or relief from a useless, dissatisfying life. He only writes the introduction, which describes the first eighteen years of his life.

Felix feels that he is a chosen one, for he ~~is~~ was born on a Sunday. Things might have ended differently for him if his father had not been a wine merchant who was a poor business man--but demanded comfort and good cheer. His sister is a fair actress on the stage, and his mother and sister have a love for each other which is not that of a mother towards a child.

Felix receives no training from his father or mother, The neighborhood children are forbidden to play with him, because his family is not respectable, and those reports are justifiable. His father has an affair with his governess, and, when his mother protests and orders her to leave, his father goes to Mainz for several weeks. The all-night parties given by his parents are sensuous affairs. For anybody, especially a sensitive person, as Felix, to breakfast with the winding up of an all-night carousal, is not very inspiring.

Felix has a vivid imagination and as he says, "what a glorious gift is the fancy, what subtle satisfaction it affords."[1]

1. Page 345.

As a very small child he pretends to be the Kaiser and all the grown-ups think it very amusing. When he is much older he fills himself with the idea that he is ~~an~~ the eighteen-year-old Prince Karl. He finds great satisfaction in the appearance of his body, which he finds princely.

He is a fanatical music lover and spends hours at the pavilion listening to the gypsy band. Because his impersonations of the band master are so perfect, his father buys him, as a joke, a cheap violin and plentifully smears the bow with vaseline. One Sunday afternoon with this violin he takes his stand beside the master and assists in the performance. It makes a spectacle and all the people present are greatly impressed. His father is asked to permit him to play at other performances, but he insists that the boy is too young and leads him away to a confectioner's for chocolate.

Felix' godfather is a painter of portraits and often uses Felix as a subject. This gives Felix an opportunity to live in his imagination while trying the various costumes. But it is a jolt to come back to the real.

Along with other imitations he acquires the copying of his father's handwriting accurately enough so that he can stay away from school and bring in signed notes. Later this forgery of people's names lands him in prison.

At his convenience he can stage an illness with

fever, vomiting etc. which puzzles the doctor. His high egotism is again shown when he describes these scenes and says: "To counterfeit illness effectively could never be within the powers of the coarse-grained man. But anyone who is made of finer stuff is always, though he may never be ill in the rude sense of the word, on familiar terms with suffering and can contrive its symptoms by intuition."[1]

During these days of feigned illness he eats the chocolate he has been stealing regularly from the corner store.

His first affair is with their housemaid, who is engaged to be married, but has to postpone her wedding for lack of funds. But he writes that he never wants for affairs.

When he becomes eighteen, his father goes into a state of bankruptcy. He tries to reestablish himself but is unsuccessful and finally shoots himself.

Felix Krull does not continue writing from this point.

1. Page 362.

DEATH IN VENICE

Gustave Aschenbach has lived and worked for many years in an orderly, rigid manner and now during the declining years he feels a "yearning for new and distant scenes, this craving for freedom, release, forgetfulness .....an impulse towards flight from the spot which was the daily theatre of a rigid, cold and passionate service."[1]

His inheritance also marks him. His father is a high judicial official and his ancestors have been officers and judges. His mother is the daughter of a Bohemian band conductor. From her he has foreign traits that are noticed in his appearance.

Because of medical advice he has been kept from school and educated at home, thus he grows up solitary, without comradeship. He has roved about for a few years and then finally settles in Munich. He marries young, but his wife dies and leaves a daughter, now already married.

His writings all have the theme of solidity, of duty, of holding fast, of praise for the men so doing--and these men honored him and called him successful.

Finally Aschenbach arrives in Venice.

The first evening there he noticed a Polish family--two daughters austerely dressed with every graceful outline suppressed and a beautiful boy with lovely curls

1. Page 381.

and beautiful clothes. Aschenbach is strangely attracted to this boy. Then for days he watches the boy on the beach or in the hotel. Once when they were in the lift together he notices the boy has imperfect teeth of a peculiar brittle transparency which anemic people often possess. This makes Aschenbach happy for he thinks, "he is delicate, he is sickly. He will most likely not live to grow old."[1]

A plague spreads in Venice and all the city is disinfected. Aschenbach is warned to leave but will not.

He stays on dressing elaborately for his love. He even has his hair dyed and waved and buys color for his lips and for under the eyes to increase their size.

He continues to follow the boy about and one day while watching Tadzio wading on the beach, his spirit seems to follow him into the water and a few minutes later when they hasten to the aid of the old man they find him collapsed in his chair--that night he dies.

This seems to be a story displaying the feelings and emotions of Aschenbach. There was no other individual noted except Tadzio, his love.

1. Page 426.

A MAN AND HIS DOG

This might well be called the biography of a pointer called Bashan. His master, a writer, treats him much differently than did Mindenickel. Mindenickel's dog, however, was used to describe Mindenickel, while in this story Bashan has the important role. There is no definite theme, but a collection of experiences of Bashan and his master.

It is the only animal story written by Thomas Mann.

DISORDER AND EARLY SORROW

Here the descriptions of a social evening for young people was particularly good. It takes place at the home of a professor just after the inflation when there is a great scarcity of food and clothing. Although the professor's house is very much in need of repairs, it is still a villa. Throughout we are shown conditions as they are, but above it all the people can still sing and enjoy themselves.

The guests are many--a Fräulein Plaichinger described as a perfect Germania, blond and voluptuous; Herr Zuber, his daughter's golfing partner, a business man who works for his uncle in a brewery; Max Hergesell a university student; a youth by the name of Müller, a typical "Wandervogel" and Herzl, an actor, who uses rouge and applies a thick coating of powder to cover a strong growth of beard, and others.

In the kitchen we find two sisters who feel acutely their descent into the ranks of domestic service. They even refuse to wear a cap, for they declare it a badge of servitude. The professor's son, on the other hand, delights in being a waiter and looks forward to being one at a night club. His daughter is prepared to pass her examinations, and probably will. There are two smaller children, Ellie and Snapper. They are allowed to remain late and enjoy the

festivities. Hergesell is very polite to the father and friendly with the children. He even dances with little Ellie who follows him about all evening. She pays no attention to her father and it hurts him somewhat. When the children are finally sent up to bed, Snapper falls promptly asleep, but Ellie cries and cries for Hergesell. Her father comes up, but he cannot soothe her. This somewhat hurts his vanity. One of the servants gets Hergesell and he speaks to her and she stops, and finally falls asleep. Her father experiences a feeling of hate toward the man who only did all these things to impress him favorably. After the child has fallen asleep, the professor is grateful that tomorrow he again will be the main source of delight.

MARIO AND THE MAGICIAN

General conditions in Torre di Venere at the opening of the story are such as to create a queer, uncomfortable, troublesome, tense and oppressive feeling. The author's family experiences three unpleasant incidents, each in turn more serious. The first evening of their arrival they are shown to a table by the waiter in charge. They prefer a table on the veranda with little pink shaded lamps, and there are still some tables empty. They are however informed that these are reserved for the clients of the hotel. By clients are meant Romans or Florentines. The adjoining room to theirs is occupied by a family of high Roman aristocracy. The author's children are now and then troubled by a slight cough left by a recent attack of whooping cough. This Roman family is very much afraid that their children will become infected and order the hotel to have the children examined and removed from the hotel. The hotel physician reports that there is no danger but they still find it necessary to have the whole family moved. These two experiences cause the author to take his family to a neighboring pension. The third incident is most trivial. The little girl has sand in her bathing-suit and is given permission to take it off and rinse it in the sea. She runs down naked, rinses her jersey and comes back. Her conduct brings forth bursts

of resentment from the people on the beach. This act has not only criminally injured the letter and spirit of the public bathing regulations but also the honor of Italy. It costs them fifty lire to appease the honor of Italy.

This feeling is brought to a climax on the evening upon which Cipolla, the magician, performs and the whole town turns out to see him.

Cipolla, while preparing the stage, makes remarks to one of the young men--remarks concerning his success with the fair sex, etc. He does this as a satisfaction for himself because of his deformity.

Cipolla does, in addition, stunts and card tricks by means of hypnotism.

Repeatedly between tricks he emphasizes the fact that his lot is a hard one, thus accounting for his need of stimulant. Other statements which he makes about the audience are attributed to his inquiries upon arrival to the town.

Repeatedly he does things to the people in the audience, against their wills--paralyzing arms, causing some to dance and others to talk in an entranced state.

Finally he takes before him Mario, a young waiter of the café, and puts him through some stunts in the midst of which, as Mario becomes aware that the magician can command his will, he fires two shots from a revolver which

kills the magician and also ends the performance. But it is with a feeling that it was right that Mario kills him to liberate so many wills and also to liberate the poor, tormented hunchback.

III. CRITICISM OF THE STORIES

Thomas Mann does not dwell very much upon the normal, the natural individual, in his short stories. He has said himself in his Vorwort (Introduction) in Rede und Antwort, "Ich leugne nicht, dass das Pathologische mich geistig mächtig anzieht, und dass es dies immer getan hat." (I do not deny that the pathological mightily attracts me spiritually, and that it has always done so.) In the words of Tonio Kröger he says, "I see into a whirl of shadows of human figures who beckon to me to weave spells to redeem them; tragic and laughable figures and some that are both together--and to these I am drawn."[1]

In many of the stories the individuals have similar markings. Mann is particularly fond of afflicting his people with tubercular troubles. In The Wardrobe, von der Qualen had ceased to keep track of time and sets out on his journey. Frau Klöterjahn in Tristan and the writer in A Weary Hour are both afflicted with some form of tuberculosis.

The ones who have brought their afflictions upon themselves are Lobgott Piepsam, Mindenickel, Felix Krull and, we might add here, Jakoby and his wife Anna, the latter because she married him. The dilettante was responsible for his own troubles, for he was not strong enough to overcome existing conditions.

1. Tonio Kröger, page 132.

The little Herr Friedemann's affliction was acquired through no fault of his own, whereas the hump on the magician was an inherited one.

In my opinion, the twins in The Blood of the Walsungs were marked because they were twins, but that did not necessarily keep them from leading a normal life.

Thomas Mann has also treated all writers as marked people because of their calling. Spinnell is a more pleasant and sympathetic person than Aschenbach, but he is a spineless, spongy type of individual. Aschenbach has served his art fathfully all those years and toward the end, when he desires to live a "normal" life and follow his art less rigidly, he comes to his downfall. Tonio Kröger alone is successful in the eyes of the world and is conscious of his accomplishments although not satisfied with himself.

The following quotations reveal the feeling of Mann toward writers in general:

From Tonio Kröger:

"I stand between two worlds. I am at home in neither, and I suffer in consequence."[1]

From The Hungry:

".....we all cherish a hidden and unappeased yearning for the harmless, simple and real in life; for a little friendly, devoted familiar human happiness. That "life" from which we are shut out....."[2]

1. Page 132.

2. Page 169.

and again:

".....we isolated dreamers, we lonely ones, disinherited of life....."[3]

From A Gleam:

"Truly it is hard not to be at home in one world or in the other. We know. But there is no half-way house."[4]

From At the Prophet's:

"Finally a novelist, ----- He belonged to quite another sphere and was present by the merest chance....."[5]

From A Weary Hour:

"To be happy and unknown, what was that by comparison? To be known----known and loved by all the world--ah, they might call that egotism, those who knew naught of the urge, naught of the sweetness of this dream! Everything out of the ordinary is egotistic, in proportion to its suffering."[6]

And from the same work:

"I must not be too utterly thine, never utterly happy in thee, for the sake of my mission."[7]

Many of the characters take their lives or desire to: little Herr Friedemann, the dilettante, Felix Krull's father, and we might say, even Jakoby from a heart attack brought on by himself.

Thomas Mann has no real heroes, even the preacher in Fiorenza preaches penance and becomes a puppet to power.

3. Page 168.
4. Page 279.
5. Page 283.
6. Page 294.
7. Page 296.

In order to supplement and reenforce my own comments, I list the following opinions from authoritative literary critics who have dealt with Mann's short stories:

In regard to Tristan, Bennett says:

"This treating with seemingly serious attention and as it were ridiculing them when their backs are turned, is particularly noticeable in Tristan in which another problem which preoccupies the author, the conflict between mind and life, is embodied in the persons of the writer Spinnell and the merchant Klöterjahn."[1]

Of Mario und der Zauberer he says:

"This is essentially only a gruesome anecdote treated with a virtuosity which extracts every possibility of gruesomeness from it."[2]

Regarding Death in Venice he says:

"Aschenbach is not so much a living being as a human vessel in which the process of decay is analyzed; and there is in the methods of the author in general a tendency to isolate mental or physical processes, separating them from the person to whom they occur, and to describe them in themselves. For example, the description of the symptoms of typhoid fever unrelated to the child. The complete disintegration of Aschenbach's ethical being, of which his death from cholera is merely the external symbol.

In no other novelle does the element of symbolism

1. Page 128.
2. Page 128.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

occupy so important a place, absorb the external action so completely, as to constitute in itself the whole essence of the story which consists fundamentally in the description of the successive states of mind of a character condemned by the author to pass through all the stages which lead to the dissolution of his ethical personality."[1]

In An Appreciation of Thomas Mann Harry Hansen says:

"The other tales show the wide variety of his intellectual interests. In each something happens, some new discovery is added to our knowledge of human beings. Some have their setting in the calm atmosphere of the north; others have warmer settings. They impress us with their author's understanding and compassion. In them we meet the author as an earnest, searching student, a whole-hearted man, and consummate master of the psychological short story."[2]

After giving a brief review of the story, Death in Venice, Mielke und Homann say:

"diese Geschichte wird ohne den von Thomas Mann stets geübten Spott, in wehmütigem Ernst, mit unbeschreiblichem Stimmungszauber und in einer wundervoll geflegten und stilvollen Sprache erzählt."[3]

And yet Havenstein says:

"Sicherlich Thomas Mann ist kein Satiriker, wer ihn dafür hält, versteht ihn nicht."[4]

1. Page 128.
2. Page 1.
3. Page 348.
4. Page 23.

The following bits of philosophy I found particularly interesting and very much Thomas Mann in nature:

Little Herr Friedemann

"Is not life in and for itself a good, regardless of whether we may call its content "happiness"?

He learned to understand that to everything belongs its own enjoyment and that it is absurd to distinguish between an experience which is "happy" and one which is not."[1]

The Dilettante

"It would seem that the more placid, detached, and solitary a man's outer life the more strenuous and violent his inner experiences are bound to be.

.....and to soothe myself with the conviction that it all had to be."[2]

"The world displays a readiness, born of indolence, to pay a man whatever degree of respect he himself demands."[3]

Tobias Mindenickel

".....unhappy, even beyond the common lot."[4]

Tonio Kröger

"He who loves the more is the inferior and must suffer."[5]

"His eyes did not plumb the depth of things to the place where life becomes complex and melancholy."[6]

Fiorenza

"I am convinced of that, it is perfectly true. All of us are far too cultured and instructed to see visions; if we did have them we would not believe in them."[7]

1. Page 5.
2. Page 28.
3. Page 52.
4. Page 52.
5. Page 86.
6. Page 94.
7. Page 197.

Fight Between Jappe and Do Escobar

".....It was from her I learned that to be well thought of by others no more is needed than to think well of yourself."[1]

"What a glorious gift is the fancy, what subtle satisfaction it affords."[2]

Death in Venice

".....to the idea that almost everything conspicuously great is great despite; has come into being in defiance of affliction and pain, poverty, destitution, bodily weakness, vice, passion and a thousand other obstructions."[3]

1. Page 329.
2. Page 345.
3. Page 384.

My favorite piece was Tonio Kröger and I agree with Havenstein when he says, "Tonio Kröger ist unzweifelhaft eines der schönsten und bedeutendsten Werke Thomas Mannes und in seiner Art den Buddenbrooks ebenbürtig."[1] (Tonio Kröger is without doubt one of the most beautiful and most important of Thomas Mann's works and in its way equal to Buddenbrooks.) Thomas Mann himself has said of Tonio Kröger in connection with the award of his Nobel prize: "Moreover it is clear, being so stated in the beautifully executed document which King Gustav gave me, that I owe the award primarily to the affection of the Northern people for my youthful novel of family life in Lübeck."[2]

It was a delight to read Tonio Kröger, but I did find it rather strenuous and often depressing to read many of these short stories at one time. The characters are so vivid that they made too great an impression upon me, particularly when life is complicated enough as it is.

Bennett says: "The Novelle (Tonio Kröger) ends on the suggestion that Mann in so far as he may be identified with his hero, will henceforth produce works of literature which will reveal the creative writer rather than the literary man. The promise inherent in that suggestion has not been fulfilled. Thomas Mann's work as a creative writer has already been done in Buddenbrooks and the characters which he presents in his later works are merely carriers

1. Page 212.
2. Page 66, Sketch of My Life.

of ideas, representatives of attitudes of mind and points of view. This is particularly true of Der Zauberberg which, with all its intellectual, critical and philosophical richness, does not contain a single living being. Even Peeperkorn, one of the characters, is an idea and not a person of flesh and blood. Mann approaches most nearly to the creation of living beings in his presentation of children of a highly sensitive nature; first chapter of Tonio Kröger and Unordnung und frühes Leid. He treats his characters with seemingly serious attention and as it were ridiculing them when their backs are turned, a method which may be described as literary bad manners."[1]

A shorter work has been associated with each of Mann's great novels. Tonio Kröger is related to Buddenbrooks.

The twenty-fourth and culminating short story, Mario and the Magician, is the most recent one in the collection and the most significant in its relation to the present situation in Europe.

"Read in 1936, (or a year later) with Fascism six years further advanced in its career, and with three years of Nazi Germany for reference, the devastating and prophetic quality of the story is many times more striking. There is no space to suggest in what rich detail, subtly driven home in incident after incident, the allegory covers its subject. One notes with new insight the

1. Page 146.

magician's egotism, his exaltation of will over being, and the symbolism of the whip and alcohol--dual weapons of intimidation and intoxication for polarizing a population.....anyone who has read the story cannot have forgotten the ending. The magician inevitably carries the game too far; he is shot to death by a young workingman."[1]

It seems clear, therefore, that Cipolla, the magician, is meant to represent the dictator who cracks his whip and makes the people dance against their will. Mario, the poor working youth, symbolizes the common people, who for a time are fascinated and hypnotized by the will of the dictator. The dictator, however, may crack his whip once too often. Mann's story may prove to be prophetic of the revolt of the masses and the overthrow of their tyrant by assassination or by political and less violent means. At any rate, this last story shows Mann's surprisingly deep insight into present conditions.

1. Herald Tribune Books, June 7, 1936. "Three Decades of Thomas Mann's Work."

IV. LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

Thomas Mann was born in Lübeck, on June 6, 1875. His father was a Senator and twice chosen mayor of the free city and head of a grain firm that had been in business for a century. "In his father's house he contacted the traditions of the great merchants of that old Hanseatic city. His paternal ancestry included more than men of material interests. His great grandfather was one of the courageous freethinkers of the eighteenth century. His grandfather became a consul in the Netherlands and, although originally a liberal, returned to orthodoxy after marriage."[1]

His mother was the daughter of a German planter in Brazil who had married into a Brazilian-Portuguese family with a strain of Indian blood. From this side of the family Mann inherited his artistic talent and his understanding of the Latin races. "From her he inherited qualities that make his works live and breathe."[2]

His childhood was sheltered and happy. He very much disliked school, but perhaps this was due somewhat to the fact that he was being prepared for the family business and also he disliked being urged to study. This experience assisted him in the presentation of <u>The Dilettante</u> and <u>Felix Krull</u>.

During his childhood days he did know a friend whom

1. "An Appreciation of Thomas Mann", Harry Hansen, page 1.
2. Ibid, page 1 .

he later described as Hans Hansen, but in real life this friend took to drink and had "a melancholy end in Africa".

After his father's death, when Mann was about fifteen, his mother sold the town house and later moved to Munich, but left Mann to board with a professor's family. His manner of living with the "scions of Mecklenburg and Holstein nobility" again gave him material for The Dilettante.

He then followed his family to Munich and entered an insurance office directed by a friend of his father's. While there he wrote his first work, a love story called Fallen, which was published.

At the end of the year his mother's lawyer assisted him in getting an income from his father's estate and he registered at the University. He attended the lectures with fair regularity and made some splendid contacts.

Later he joined his brother Heinrich in Rome, who was also gathering materials for his writings. They lived very much apart and fled whenever they heard German spoken so that they would not have to explain how and why they were spending their time. This is much like the dilettante. Here, in Italy, his first book was written and Little Herr Friedemann was accepted by the publishers in Berlin.

Again he returned to Munich, but set up bachelor quarters, which are described somewhat in The Wardrobe. He also had a position on "Simplicissimus" for about a year. Here he laid the foundation for Buddenbrooks. While working

on a great work he usually wrote a lesser one. A statement made by Mann regarding Kurt Martens, a writer, who listened to the reading of Buddenbrooks, shows also that Mann had few very close friends. "He belonged to the few people -- I could count them on the fingers of one hand -- whom I ever addressed as 'du'."

When he was called to "serve his year", the year was reduced to three months. Like Felix Krull, he developed a painful inflammation of the sinew of the ankle which caused him to be transferred to a hospital and thus escape the noise, enforced idleness, and "iron compulsion to be trim". When he was examined for the World War, the first doctor had read his works and declared: "You shall be left alone." The others submitted to his verdict.

In 1905 he frequented a few Munich drawing-rooms where there was artistic and literary atmosphere. Such a one was the Pringsheim home. The head of the house was a personal acquaintance of Wagner and a possessor of many fine books on art and music, even though he devoted his time to lecturing on Mathematics at the University. Mann married the only daughter of the family. There were six children of this marriage which has been a very happy and understanding relationship. Elizabeth, next to the youngest, is the favorite child. She is the Ellie of Early Sorrow.

For his fiftieth birthday he finished the Magic Mountain, which is so far his greatest single work.

In 1910 his second sister Carla, took her life. She had chosen a stage career, but had only her beauty to offer. As a child she had been very near death because of bronchial complications. She was most unconventional, but refined. She kept a death's head to adorn her room and kept poison hidden near at hand. This was a piece of acting. Failing finally in her efforts on the stage, she tried to return to a bourgeois sphere by marrying the son of an Alsatian industrialist. During her previous career she had lived with another man and when her young fiancé called her to account, she took cyanide.

Her death dealt a tremendous blow to Mann's mother. The inflation and revolutionary period made a great impression on her and she was contented to rejoice in the glories of her sons and make no demands for herself. She died at seventy, being spared the heart-break of losing her other daughter Julia, who also died by her own hand. These suicides in his own family undoubtedly influenced Mann's writing and account, to some extent, for the morbid atmosphere and abnormality of some of the characters.

In 1929 Thomas Mann was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. From this time on he has been an international figure and has traveled extensively. In addition to his year's residence in Italy before his marriage, he went to Spain in 1923, visited London in 1924 and Paris in 1927.

He visited Egypt and Palestine to prepare his recent novels dealing with Joseph. In 1934 he attended a dinner in New York given by his American publishers. In 1935 he came to America to accept a degree of Doctor of Letters from Harvard University at the same commencement where Albert Einstein also received a honorary degree. Mann was handed his diploma by President Conant with the citation quoted by me in my introduction.

"Since 1933 Dr. Mann has been living in Switzerland in self-imposed exile at the sacrifice of two-thirds of his fortune. In that year he gave a public lecture in connection with the celebration in Germany of the fiftieth anniversary of Wagner's death, in which he described the great composer as a European, not a primitive German. The response to this lecture was so unfavorable that Mann left the country. Opposed to Anti-Semitism, disliking militarism, out of sympathy with narrow nationalism, a champion of personal liberty, how could the novelist feel at home in the Germany of the Third Reich?"[1]

Mann kept silent for a long time as to his political views. Recently, however, an attack upon his fellow-exiles, who were accused of representing the international Jewish influence in German letters, aroused him to defend them with the following statement:

"The deep conviction that nothing good for Germany

1. Mario und der Zauberer, Introduction, page xi.

or the world can come out of the present German régime, has made me avoid the country in whose spiritual traditions I am more deeply rooted than are those who for three years have been trying to find courage enough to declare before the world that I am not a German. And I feel to the bottom of my heart that I have done right in the eyes of my contemporaries and of posterity."[1]

Recently Mann took an even more definite stand against the Hitler régime. This was occasioned by a letter which he received from Bonn revoking the honorary degree which he held from that University there. His powerful and scathing reply was published in The Nation for March 6, 1937 and has been circulated widely in the original German in the form of re-prints. This document will form a permanent and important part of Mann's literary work. The following concluding sentence shows how deeply the great writer deplores the present situation of his country:

"Gott helfe unserm verdüsterten und missbrauchten Lande und lehre es, seinen Frieden zu machen mit der Welt und mit sich selbst!" (God help our sad and abused country and teach it to make its peace with the world and with itself.)

This spring Thomas Mann made a brief visit to New York. He made so eloquent a speech at a dinner there that a wealthy American philanthropist donated $100,000 to pay the salaries of a group of exiled German professors

1. "Homage to Thomas Mann"
The New Republic, April, 1936

who are conducting a university in the city. During his stay here Mann gave several interviews to the newspapers and expressed an unusual view of the present situation in Germany. He believes that the German people are getting tired of their aggressive leaders, whom he calls "false prophets". He believes that war is not near and that thinking Germans are convinced that war would mean the end of their nation.

Mann is adding a fourth book to his trilogy on Joseph and is at work on a novel based on material from the life of Goethe.

V. CONCLUSION

From a study of Thomas Mann's life in conjunction with his short stories it is clear that his interest in the individual who is abnormal physically or psychologically is due to the fact that his own life and background are out of the ordinary. To the fact that he is a writer and that all writers are a little different from other men, we add the fact that through the circumstances of his exile Mann is still a marked man himself. Although qualified by birth to satisfy the Aryan requirements of the extreme Nazi partisans in Germany, he lives in exile. Although he is the most representative and outstanding writer in the German language today, he is slandered and reviled in his native country and his books are banned

there. What more striking example could be found of a man marked by circumstances to be different from his compatriots? No wonder Mann shows in his writings so much interest and sympathy for characters who are deformed, queer, or set apart from their fellow-men through no fault of their own!

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